

# **Student & Parent Handbook**

## **Putney Central School**

(Latest revision: October 2018)

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## OUR MISSION

The Mission of the Putney Central School community is to encourage, guide, and support one another to grow as kind and respectful thinkers who trust and believe we can make a positive difference in life.

Herve Pelletier, Principal  
Putney Central School  
182 Westminster Road, Putney, Vermont 05346  
(802) 3875521 Fax: (802) 3872776  
[www.putneycentral.org](http://www.putneycentral.org)

## **FACULTY & STAFF**

(To reach any faculty/staff person via email use the following convention: ngagnon@wsesu.org)

Sarah Coughlin	Admin. Assistant
Nancy Gagnon	Admin. Assistant
Marisa Lazarus	School Counselor
Arlene Scott	School Nurse
Valerie Kosednar	PK4
Sarah Cassidy	K
Maureen Ward	1
Aimee Levesque	2
Jenn O'Donnell	3
Henny Walsh	4
Audrey Sager	5
Marybeth Berberick	MS Math
Leah Toffolon	MS Social Studies
Don Linden	MS Science/Technology
Amanda Dixon	MS English
Lynne Borofsky	Special Ed
Jen Wilcox	Special Ed
Ellen Tumavicus	PK-8 Art
Josh Fields	PK-8 Music
Lauren Pearlstein	PK-8 Library/Media
Stacey Frazer	Academic Support

Robert Brooks	Behavior Support
Catherine Hamilton	Speech & Language
Laetitia LaBail	Intensive Services Program, Lead Teacher
Sherry Ames	Paraprofessional
Terry Davis	Paraprofessional/IS
Eric Lemm	Paraprofessional/IS
Melissa Lowe	Paraprofessional
Donna Sheehan	Paraprofessional
Ruth Shultz	Paraprofessional
Hannah Van Loon	Paraprofessional
Amber Rose	Paraprofessional/IS
Aidan Holding	Paraprofessional
Matt Mabry	Paraprofessional
Steve Napoli	Head of Maintenance
Kevin Struthers	Evening Maintenance

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## **SCHOOL HOURS**

8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Supervision for students is provided beginning at 7:45 a.m. outside on the playground. Students arriving prior to 7:45 should wait in the glass hallway. In inclement weather, students will be supervised in the gym, and with permission, in the library. School begins promptly at 8:15 a.m., which is when students should be in their classrooms. We ask that students not be in classroom spaces until 8:10 without prior arrangement, as teachers are busy preparing for the day and unable to provide adequate supervision. Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. are considered tardy and should report to the office before going to their classroom.

## **SCHOOL TELEPHONE/FAX**

**Telephone number: (802.387-5521) Fax number: (802.387-4126)**

Students may certainly use the school phone, but for “emergency” situations only; for example, forgotten lunches, illness, sports cancellations, etc. Before using any phone, a student should ask permission from a teacher, administrative assistant or the principal. Email can also be a useful way to get in touch. To reach our front office, email our admin assistants, Sarah Coughlin at [scoughlin@wsesu.org](mailto:scoughlin@wsesu.org), or Nancy Gagnon at [ngagnon@wsesu.org](mailto:ngagnon@wsesu.org)

It is helpful if afterschool plans or play dates can be arranged at home *before* your child comes to school in the morning. Please provide him/her with a written note for the office confirming such plans. Doing so makes things a lot less hectic in the front office at dismissal time, and is much appreciated!

## **SCHOOL NEWSLETTER, WEBSITE & FACEBOOK**

Most weeks we publish a weekly newsletter that contains important information for students and parents/guardians. The newsletter is sent out in pdf form via our email notification system, School Messenger. If you require a paper copy, please let Sarah or Nancy know and we’ll be sure to send one home via Backpack Express. Website address: [www.putneycentral.org](http://www.putneycentral.org) Facebook has become another important conduit for school information, cancellations, and an archive of all the cool things that go on here every day. Check it regularly. [https://www.facebook.com/PCSPutneyVT/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/PCSPutneyVT/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)

## **REGISTRATION DATA/EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM**

A Registration Data/Emergency Information form must be completed **each year** for every child enrolled at PCS. Be sure to provide us with at least three emergency contact numbers.

NOTE: If custodial parents/guardians live in different households, please provide the school with complete contact information so that each household may receive communications from the school. It’s especially important that you notify us if your phone number(s), physical or email addresses, or emergency contacts change during the school year. ([scoughlin@wsesu.org](mailto:scoughlin@wsesu.org))

## **ENROLLMENT**

Students for our PK4 (preschool) program must be four (4) years old by September 1st to start school, while kindergarten students must be five (5) and first graders six (6). (See PK4 enrollment guidelines, note about PK After-Care elsewhere in this handbook.) Please note that in order to attend PCS all students must have a biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian living full time in Putney, and that we require proof of residency for all new students. Homeless students/parents should check in with school counselor Marisa Lazarus with residency questions.

Prospective students and their parents are always welcome to visit. Please contact Marisa Lazarus, school counselor, or Herve Pelletier, principal, for an appointment.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Vermont Statutes Annotated, Title 16, Section 1221 states that: “A person having the control of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall cause such child to attend public school continually for the full number of days which such school is held, unless such a child is mentally or physically unable to attend.”

The WSESU and PCS have made concerted efforts at supporting students and families that are experiencing challenges around attendance. A missed school day, or a day when a student arrives late, presents a number of missed opportunities, and it can be difficult with makeup work, missed tests, activities, etc., so please don't miss school unless absolutely necessary. Studies have shown that attitudes regarding school attendance develop at a very early age, and that students who miss school, even in the early grades, are at substantially greater risk of not completing high school.

At PCS we categorize absences as “excused” or “unexcused.” Reasons for excused absences include illness, medical appointments that could not be scheduled during afterschool times, religious holidays, and family emergencies. All others will be considered unexcused, but of course, the principal has some discretion in this matter. Good communication helps, so please let us know as soon as possible if an absence seems likely. And please keep in mind that attitudes about tardiness and absence can have a significant impact on your child, and emphasizing the need for prompt arrival and consistent attendance can go a long way toward developing positive attitudes about school.

## **TRUANCY**

It is our shared responsibility to be sure that every child is safe and accounted for every school day. If your child is absent from school, it is very important that you notify the school at 387-5521 x0 no later than 9:00 a.m. If we do not hear from a parent/guardian by 9:00 a.m., we are required, for safety reasons, to call the Windham County Sheriff to report your child's absence. The sheriff's deputy may conduct a “well child visit” in order to be sure that the lack of communication is merely an oversight and not something more serious.

## **TARDINESS**

Students should arrive at school no later than 8:10 a.m. Students arriving after 8:15 are tardy and must report to the office before going to class. The school reserves the right to determine if a student tardy is excused or unexcused. There will be some flexibility, but chronic tardiness can have unintended impacts on learning.

Children who regularly arrive late miss the opportunity to be greeted by their teachers and classmates, settle in, and learn about the day's schedule. Parents of children above kindergarten level should say their goodbyes at the entrance to the school if at all possible, as doing so imbues a sense of self-reliance and independence that is essential for all children. Please enlist the support of your child's teacher or our school counselor, Marisa Lazarus, if your child is struggling with this after the first few weeks of school.

Reflective of WSESU guidelines regarding regular school attendance, families that continue to struggle with tardiness and/or attendance issues may be referred to the VT Department of Children and Families (DCF), or Windham County Family Court for support. We ask that parents/guardians work with us to ensure that students arrive on time so that they can get off to a positive start every day, and be sure to let us know if you're facing unusual challenges in getting your child to school. We know things happen, and we're here to help.

## DAILY DISMISSAL

Walkers/Riders: 2:45

Buses: Upon Arrival (usually between 2:45 and 3:00 p.m.)

The end of the day is a very busy time for students and teachers. We ask that parents/guardians who pick up their children wait in their vehicle unless they have a scheduled appointment with a teacher. Parents of children in grades K-4 should drop off/pick up in the rear lot. Students in grades 5-8 can be dropped off/picked up in the front "horseshoe" driveway.

**Note: Under no circumstances should drivers pass a bus displaying its flashing red lights.**

We appreciate your help in keeping the hallways clear, particularly by the front office "intersection", thus ensuring the safety of your child and others. Please be sure to honor the "Live Parking Only" area in the rear driveway by not leaving your car when parked there. Walkers, riders in private cars and bicycle riders are dismissed first. Students should not run or play in parking or traffic areas. For the safety of all, we ask that drivers remain in their vehicles. After loading, please exit the driveway at no more than 5 mph. If you have an appointment after school, we ask that you park in the rear parking lot, not in the driveway adjacent to the building.

It is strongly recommended that students return home from school when dismissed unless they are participating in the Y-ASPIRE After School Program or other school supervised activity. For more on Y-ASPIRE, visit:

<http://www.meetingwatersymca.org/programs/schoolagecare/yaspire>

While we understand the lure of the public library, we suggest that parents evaluate the reasons that their child might provide for needing to go there after school and provide your child with guidelines for visiting, as library personnel can not be expected to supervise children who are outside the building.

Students enrolled in athletic activities must report to their coach. Younger siblings may not attend practices or games unless directly supervised by an adult.

## **WALKING/BICYCLING TO/FROM SCHOOL**

It's great when children walk or ride to school! Please review good common sense rules with your children, and place particular emphasis on the "don't talk to strangers" rule. If your child intends to walk or ride, please fill out the permission form in the First Day packet and return it to the front office. This permission form must be filled out and kept on file. Students biking between Putney Village and PCS are expected to:

- Use the sidewalk
- Grant the right of way to all pedestrians
- Slow down when near pedestrians and signal their presence (voice, bell, etc.)
- Travel at reasonable speeds between home and school
- Wear helmets for their own protection
- Park their bicycles at the bicycle rack and secure their bicycles with a lock.

Students are not allowed to ride bikes in our parking lot, on the playground, on the lawn, or in the front driveway between 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., unless under the direct supervision of school personnel. The pump track and skills course are open both before and after school, and available, but riders should walk their bikes over during the high traffic drop off/pick up times. We've never had an issue with bike security, but bikes should be placed in the rack during the day, and that a lock is never a bad idea. PCS cannot be responsible for bike security.

## **PARKING LOT SAFETY**

Parents can help us promote parking lot safety by respecting our requirement that no cars be left unattended in the "live parking only" area and remaining in your vehicle until your child/children come out to meet you. We are required by law to maintain a fire lane, and cannot do so if unattended vehicles are parked near the building.

Parking in the designated "visitor" parking area on the north side of the generator building "island" if you intend to walk your child in to school or meet them at the end of the day. Please walk carefully through the trees and cross the driveway to the sidewalk that leads into the glass hall. Please respect our student traffic control volunteers as they work to keep us all safe.



Being extremely cautious when entering or exiting the parking areas. Little bodies are moving everywhere and often are not paying attention to vehicular traffic. Please operate your vehicle within the 5 mph speed limit at all times when on campus. Let's keep all our kids SAFE!

Arranging to arrive a bit earlier in the morning, when you'll likely find a substantial decrease in vehicular traffic... and a commensurate decrease in driver stress level. Traffic is always at its most congested in the drop off/pick up area during the five minutes or so before school starts, so if you can show up before the 5 minute "rush" it will be a big help.

Remembering that suggestions and reminders from school personnel are offered in the spirit of keeping everyone safe. Thanks!

## **EARLY RELEASE**

Early dismissal is normally at 11:45 a.m., but know that this may be subject to modification. Notice of upcoming early release days will be published in the newsletter and school calendar on the school website, but you can always call if in doubt. We generally serve lunch prior to ER day dismissals.

## **STUDENT EARLY DISMISSAL**

Students cannot be dismissed before the end of the day without written consent from a parent/guardian. Early dismissal is used only for unavoidable circumstances such as medical appointments or similar events. Students picked up before the end of the day must be signed out in the office by a parent/guardian.

Please note: If someone other than the student's parent/guardian is coming for the student, written permission must indicate that person's name. We work hard to keep track of all our students, and notes that fully explain changes in plans help a great deal in this regard.

## **FAMILY TRIPS**

We recognize that students may be absent on occasion for reasons other than illness, such as family emergencies or trips. The school certainly recognizes that family trips and travel can be worthwhile learning experiences, and is not in a position to judge the relative merit of family trips, etc. However, when students miss school for a period of time, it has the potential to have negative consequences on their schoolwork, and can prove disruptive to their classmates when they return. This is particularly true when students return to school and find themselves behind in their studies and a somewhat overwhelmed by makeup/overdue assignments.

We offer the following guidelines when an extended absence is anticipated: If at all possible, schedule the event during school vacation periods. If this is not possible, the parent/guardian

must notify the child's teacher(s) and Sarah Coughlin ([scoughlin@wsesu.org](mailto:scoughlin@wsesu.org)) in the front office at least five school days in advance so there is ample time to design a plan that best compensates for missed learning time at school. Planned absences of more than five (5) days duration need to be approved by Lyle Holiday, WSESU Superintendent.

Please bear in mind that the entire school program cannot be duplicated by outside assignments, nor is it always possible for teachers to provide work in advance for extended periods of absence. Significant advance notice always helps.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO EXTREME WEATHER OR EVACUATION**

The school will make every attempt to inform parents/guardians about early dismissals, school cancellations or evacuations. School cancellations due to inclement weather will be announced on radio stations WTSA and WKVT in Brattleboro and WKNE in Keene, generally by 6:00 a.m., and via an email or a phone call through our School Messenger system.

Please keep in mind that our School Messenger system, our telephone/email messaging service, requires accurate contact information for each student in order to function properly. With this in mind, we ask that parents/guardians make certain that we have your most current phone numbers and email addresses. If your contact information changes during the year, please notify us immediately. It is important that students know where they should go in case of an expected or unexpected early dismissal, so please review this with your child(ren) at the beginning of the school year. Doing so can greatly reduce the stress that sometimes accompanies unexpected early release days for weather, etc.

## **REUNIFICATION IN THE EVENT OF EVACUATION**

In the event that an all-school evacuation becomes necessary, we would utilize appropriate communication channels to let parents know where to meet/pickup their children. Parents should not report to school during an actual event, but wait for guidance via the official channels of communication mentioned above. A word of caution regarding social media: unless transmitted via our official PCS Facebook page, our PCS School Messenger communication system (phone/email/both), or from the Superintendent of Schools, Lyle Holiday - by way of a phone call or email - any messages that appear on social media should be regarded with a fair degree of skepticism.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL VISITS**

Your presence in the school is always welcome. In fact, parents/guardians are encouraged to visit their child's classroom during the school year. The following guidelines are designed to ensure safety for all children and to minimize unexpected interruptions:

- If possible, please arrange visits in advance with the teacher.

- All visitors to the school, including parents, must check in at the office to obtain a “visitor’s pass” that must be worn while visiting the school.
- In order to minimize disruptions, forgotten lunches, sneakers, permission slips, etc. should be left at the office, not taken directly to your child’s classroom.
- When visiting a classroom, please enter as quietly and unobtrusively as possible, and join into activities only when invited to do so by the teacher.
- Parents/guardians are welcome to join their child for lunch any day; this requires no advance notice, but be sure to sign in at the front office when doing so.
- Students who wish to bring a visitor to the school must have permission from their teacher in advance. Sorry, but we are not able to accommodate “Drop-in” student visitors.

## **HOME/SCHOOL COMPACT**

Our mission is to encourage, guide and support one another to grow as kind and respectful thinkers who trust and believe we can make a positive difference in life. We believe that all children can learn and achieve success. For this to happen, parents/guardians, school staff and students need to work together. Therefore, cooperation and good communication between home and school is essential. We do our best to keep you abreast of your of your child’s academic progress, personal and social development and work habits. Putney Central will use the resources that it receives from Title I federal aid based on income levels for Supplementary Educational Services (availability varies from year to year. See Marisa Lazarus for more on this.) We ask that you inform Ms. Lazarus and/or your child’s teacher(s) of any information that may affect your child’s performance at school. Please take time to read and discuss this agreement, or compact, with your child.

Parents/students: please be sure to review, sign, and return a copy of the PCS Home/School Compact, which is contained in your First Day packet, and available, as well, in the front office. Thanks!

## **COMPLAINTS**

The public is encouraged to express its concerns and/or complaints about the operation of the school or about personnel within the school system. The Putney Town School Board feels that there must be an orderly procedure for processing complaints in order to assure appropriate handling and timely responses.

Please do not call a school board member as your first step. The majority of issues concerning day to day operations of the school can best be settled with the people closest to the problem. We urge you to discuss the problem at this level first. If there is a problem, for example, with a

teacher or bus driver, please talk with the teacher or bus driver first. If you are not satisfied, or if you are uncomfortable talking to the person directly involved, you should contact the Principal or Superintendent, whomever you feel is appropriate. Any complaint made to the Principal or the Superintendent will be investigated and discussed with the person(s) who are the cause of your complaint. No response will be made until all facts and information have been collected.

Appeals to the Putney Town School Board need to be made in writing, with a precise description of the problem, signed by the complainant and filed with the superintendent at least six (6) days before a scheduled school board meeting. The Putney Town School Board will make a decision within a reasonable time after hearing the evidence and conducting any necessary investigation.

## **HOMEWORK**

Learning is a lifelong process that involves not only the students and teachers, but parents/guardians as well. Homework assignments are often part of the learning process and curriculum and aim to:

- Reinforce and extend upon material taught during the day;
- Instill self-discipline and responsibility, for example, time management skills;
- Involve parents in the educational process;
- Encourage more indepth study of specific topics at a pace and time appropriate for each student.

Homework expectations increase as students move up through the grades. The following figures are guideline averages of focused homework time that students can expect on a regular basis.

- Preschool: get outside and play!
- Kindergarten: little or none (see preschool, above!)
- Grades 1, 2: 15-30 minutes
- Grade 3: 25-35 minutes
- Grade 4: 35-60 minutes
- Grade 5: 45-60 minutes
- Grades 6/7: 60-90 minutes

## **POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL**

As a means of keeping our middle school parents up to speed with their child's academic progress we have set up a "parent portal" as part of our PowerSchool school information database. Parents can keep tabs on homework completion, tests, quizzes, and other items that impact student success. Please see Sarah in the front office for further Parent Portal information, including username and password help.

## **SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM**

Putney Central School offers an in-house, federally subsidized breakfast, snack, lunch and afterschool meal program to ensure that all children have access to proper nutrition. Many of our families are eligible for free/reduced meals, but may not realize it. Please know that by merely applying for our meals program you are under no obligation to participate, but you are helping ***all*** of our kids in important ways, as our free/reduced lunch “percentage” is used to determine our school’s eligibility for any number of federally funded programs and initiatives, including important Title 1 funding and “meals for all” program. If you have any questions about this, please check in with Sarah in the front office, school counselor Marisa Lazarus or principal Herve Pelletier.

Beginning with the ‘15/’16 school year we took our food service program “in house” in order to provide healthy, tasty meals made at very reasonable prices. Menus are posted in our school newsletter. A la carte items, additional entrée, or snack/beverage purchases are available and are must be paid for separately. You should know that we are all cognizant of the vital role that nutrition plays in the lives of all of our children, and are working very hard to ensure high quality, locally purchased food at affordable rates.

Checks to The Putney Central School Nutrition Program may be written in any amount and should be given to the staff in the kitchen.

#### **MEALS PRICES ‘18/19**

	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>ADULTS</b>
<b>BREAKFAST</b>	\$1.80	\$3.00
<b>LUNCH</b>	\$2.90	\$5.00
<b>EXTRA MILK</b>	.60	.60

#### **FOOD4KIDS PROGRAM**

“One in five Vermont children experiences hunger or food hardship. Many Vermonters find this number surprising. In the United States, a country with so much wealth, it is inconceivable that there are people who struggle to meet their basic needs. And yet, hunger is a daily reality for Americans in every state. Lack of affordable housing, low wages, high unemployment, a decrease in the number of local, affordable grocery stores, and lack of public transportation all contribute to hunger and food insecurity in Vermont.” *Hunger Free Vermont*

Every Thursday the Food4Kids program provides an option for *all* students to take home a few nutritious food items, including fresh fruit and vegetables when available.

#### **MEALS ACCOUNTS**

All students participating in the meals program receive a password-protected account, similar to a checking account. Payments will be collected in homeroom every Monday. Please prepay your child's account (preferably by check) every Monday or at the beginning of each week/month. Make checks payable to PCS Lunch Program. Include the child's name in the memo section or on the outside of an envelope. If paying with cash, include the amount enclosed on the outside of the envelope, the child's name, and the name of the parent or guardian. Meals may also be purchased on a cash basis each day.

Please note: You may redeem any credits and receive a check from the school if you decide to discontinue your child's participation in the program.

## **FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS PROGRAM**

Your family may be eligible for free or reduced price breakfast and lunch. As mentioned earlier, we encourage parents/guardians to apply for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, even if they believe their family may not be eligible, as income limits are higher than you might imagine, and the greater our enrollment in the program the greater access we have to increased aid for educational support from various government programs. Forms and state guidelines are available at school. (Applications may be submitted to Sarah Coughline in the front office, or school counselor Marisa Lazarus, at anytime during the year.) Applications for the Free and Reduced Food program are processed confidentially.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counseling services at PCS are available to all students in PK4 (preschool) through Grade 8. Such services are in place to assist students in realizing their potential as members of the school community on working their academic success. The school counselor can assist students with personal, social, and academic issues through individual counseling, small group experiences and classroom visits. The counselor is available for consultation with faculty, administration, parents/guardians, and community to help in their understanding of and support for students. Working within the school and in the community, the counselor coordinates services that foster the fullest academic and personal growth for students. It should be noted that our school counselor should not be considered a therapist, but can be a resource in recommending therapists with whom we have established a relationship.

Counseling service updates are shared through the parent newsletter, direct mailing, our school website, and phone calls. Referrals for counseling services can be made by students, parents, teachers or administrators. An expanding library of information relating to child development and parenting is available for borrowing. Parents/guardians who have questions or concerns regarding their child's development, school performance, or the impact of family issues on their child, are encouraged to call the school counselor, Marisa Lazarus, at 387-5521 Ext. 130, or [mlazarus@wsesu.org](mailto:mlazarus@wsesu.org)

## **PUTNEY COMMUNITY CARES**

Putney Community Cares has included the former Putney Family Services (PFS) into its comprehensive approach to providing individuals and families in Putney a wide range of social services.

PCC's mission is "to foster the health, well-being, and independence of all members of [the Putney] community, from newborns to our most senior, by strengthening family and community bonds. We serve individuals, families, and elders in our community. We provide outreach, direct support, programming, and connection to services. Putney Community Cares is dedicated to building and maintaining a vital, healthy Putney community."

For information on any Putney Community Cares program, please call 387-2120, or visit their website: [www.putneycommunitycares.org](http://www.putneycommunitycares.org)

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM/ASPIRE**

PCS offers after school programs through the Y-ASPIRE program, based locally at the Meeting Waters YMCA. A number of other schools in our area have similar arrangements, and we're excited to be able to offer a robust after school program, which will include an "early supper" to all students who participate.

<http://www.meetingwatersymca.org/programs/schoolagecare/yaspire>

## **KEY BENEFITS of Y-ASPIRE**

Runs not only afterschool on typical school days but also for full days during all school vacations and on most holidays, as well as for half days on all inservice days; Enriching curriculum that includes homework help, literacy development, physical activity, nutritious snacks, arts, and group projects organized around a monthly theme; Develops and supports 36 of the 40 "Developmental Assets" that research has shown to support "thriving behaviors" and decrease "risk behaviors"; Highquality, reliable staff of youth development professionals; Affordable rates with a number of financial assistance options; Family activities focus on connecting families (with each other and with other families) and on family health; YASPIRE is a licensed school-age child care program which ensures high standards of safety, proper staff training, and an ageappropriate curriculum. This licensing also allows parents to access the Child Care Subsidy Program, which provides financial support to parents who are working or in job training programs; The program takes place right here at PCS!

Note: Extended Day programming is available to PK4 students on a first come/first served basis, and may be limited due to staffing availability. Cost is \$15/day per student. Please see PK4 lead teacher Valerie Kosednar ([vkosednar@wsesu.org](mailto:vkosednar@wsesu.org)) for further information.

## **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM (EST)**

Every Vermont school is required by law to establish an Educational Support Team (EST) comprised of teachers and other school personnel. The purpose of the EST is to review student referrals from teachers and/or parents who may have concerns about academic or social issues, and to offer support to teachers, students and families. Students may be referred to the EST by school staff or parents/guardians.

Our EST Team meets weekly to discuss academic concerns brought to it by teachers or parents, and considers itself a vital contact point for teachers, students, and parents. For more information, contact Herve Pelletier, Principal or Marisa Lazarus, School Counselor.

## **SCHOOLWIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT (TITLE I)**

Putney Central School receives Title I federal aid. These funds are used to provide academic assistance to students who are unable to meet the state's content and performance standards. Part of the formula used by the federal government to determine funding amounts depends on our free/reduced meals program enrollment, so please be sure to apply, even if you think you might not be eligible!

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special education teachers and paraprofessionals offer a spectrum of educational services and accommodations to students in the "least restrictive environment" possible, depending on individual student need. These services may include, but are not limited to, individualized programming, specialized assistance with assignments or classroom accommodations. At PCS special educators work closely with classroom teachers, parents, outside academic and mental health professionals, as well as a number of WSESU personnel to ensure that all students can access and participate in our educational program. If you have questions about our Special Education programming, please contact PCS SpecialEd Team Leader Lynne Borofsky ([lborofsky@wsesu.org](mailto:lborofsky@wsesu.org)), or the WSESU Director of Special Education, Marisa Duncan-Holley.

## **SECTION 504 ACCOMMODATIONS**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute that provides protection against discrimination based on a disability, which has been verified through formal school testing or other professional evaluation that *substantially limits a major life activity* and access to school programs.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available for students in 6th through 8th grades for storage of books, schoolwork, clothing, etc. Students should never leave valuable items in their lockers. Students may use a school-issued combination lock for their locker upon payment of a small security deposit, which is refunded to the student when the lock is returned at the end of the school year. PCS cannot be held responsible for items left in lockers or on school property.



Please keep in mind that school lockers are the property of PCS, and are essentially on loan to students. Students do not have a legal right to privacy regarding the contents of their lockers. By law, access to lockers remains a right of the school administration. School or legal authorities, at the school's discretion, can conduct locker searches. Student use of lockers is legally considered a "joint ownership" arrangement.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS)/SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Learning requires a certain amount of organization and discipline on the part of all students, teachers, and staff. It is always easier for students to acquire these skills within a safe and healthy environment. School rules ensure the safety of all members of the school community, promote mutual respect and facilitate peaceful coexistence for a diverse school community population.

To help us with this mission, PCS is entering year eleven of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program initiative. PBIS is a schoolwide approach for improving social and academic success and school climate for all students. Our acronym PRIDE stands for our school's behavioral expectations: Participation, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Effort. (Makes for a great dinner conversation once in a while....) School staff members and volunteers will continue to work closely with students on these concepts. Our aim is to have a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

All faculty, staff, and support personnel members have assumed responsibility for teaching and enforcing school-wide expectation and rules, as well as rewarding positive behavior. We're proud to be a PBIS school, but we need all of our parents/guardians to partner with us in support of these expectations on and off school grounds if we are to be able to promote positive social and emotional development. For more on PBIS: <http://www.pbisvermont.org/>

***Students are urged to keep PCS "PRIDE"***  
***-Participation, Respect, Independence, Dedication, Effort-***  
***in mind at all times!***

### **GENERAL SCHOOL RULES, aka: How we show Putney "PRIDE" every day**

- Treat others and our school with respect.
- Use appropriate language.
- No teasing, bullying or "putdowns".
- Conduct yourself with the safety and welfare of yourself and others in mind.
- Use your intelligence, words, and the help of friends and your teachers to solve problems.
- Walk quietly in the halls, and stay to the right side of the hallway.

- Offer and return greetings to others.
- Do not chew gum anywhere in school or on school grounds.

## **LUNCHROOM RULES**

- Speak in a quiet, “inside” tone of voice.
- Wait in line quietly for your lunch.
- Remain in your seat while eating.; no “visiting” other tables.
- Clean up after yourself, being sure to pay attention to the labels on the “trash” and “recycle” bins. (Yes, we have custodial staff to help, but it is not their primary responsibility to clean up after you when you are capable of doing it yourself.)
- Do not share food or move food from one tray to another.
- Be extra sure to respect the “nut free” table in order to help our friends with allergies.

## **PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR**

- Always treat others with respect.
- Allow everyone to participate in playground games – “everyone plays!”
- Use equipment provided by the school appropriately; do not bring your own sports equipment.
- No running in the apparatus area of the playground.
- Students must wear appropriate footwear when in the apparatus area; no flipflops, please.

## **PBIS TEACHING MATRIX**

<b>PRIDE</b>	<b>Instructional Settings</b>	<b>Hallways</b>	<b>Recess/ playground</b>	<b>Lunchroom/ Lunchtime manners</b>	<b>Bathrooms</b>
<b>I Participate</b>	Be part of the activity, share	Greet others, and respond to others' greetings	Include others.	Welcome others to your table.	Report problems, and rejoin class quickly.
<b>I Respect myself and others</b>	Use friendly words and soft voices. Be safe, and follow	Use an indoor voice. Walk on the right side of the hall. Keep	Share. Be kind. Play safe	Practice good table manners.	Honor privacy

	teacher's directions	your hands and feet to yourself.			
Continued... I am <b>Dedicated</b>	Use classroom materials responsibly, and clean up after yourself.	Keep hallways clean and tidy.	Return equipment.	Clean up eating area: recycle, compost, throw away trash.	Flush after use, and leave it clean.
I give my best <b>Effort</b>	Try your best, even when it's hard. Believe in yourself.		Be a good sport.		

## DRESS CODE

Being neat and properly dressed for school is a good idea for lots of reasons, and has been shown to positively impact learning. While it is certainly not our intention to squelch anyone's personal expression, it's best if students approach dressing for school as you might if you had a job and needed to meet certain expectations. After all, school is your "job" right now and we should dress to feel comfortable, but also to be able to fully participate in all activities - in the classroom, at recess, at PE, and in the Forest - without having to feel self-conscious. While we're sensitive to the shifting trends in "fashion," we nonetheless feel it important to maintain a reasonable sense of decorum when it comes to student and faculty/staff dress.

All students must observe the following guidelines for dress:

- Bare midriffs, low scooped tops, backless or T-back shirts, tight fitting and/or sleeveless "spaghetti" strap shirts should not be worn.
- All shorts/skirts must be "fingertip" length (mid thigh).
- Pajama bottoms, cut-off sweats, mini skirts, short shorts, and decorative chains are not allowed.
- Any clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco, drugs or negative messages toward a people - gender/national origin/race - or nation is not allowed.
- Hats (including bandanas) should not be worn when in the building.
- In order to be able to fully participate, students must have a T-shirt and running/training shoes (sneakers) for PE days. (See Mr. Bristol if you need help with this... we sometimes have spares.)

Students found to be in violation of these guidelines will be offered clean clothing as a substitute, and/or parents may be notified and asked to bring replacement clothing from home.

We realize that at times students may find themselves without access to clean clothes or a hot shower. We're more than happy to help out when families find themselves in this situation, and urge you to contact the school nurse, counselor, or principal for confidential support. We have a washer and dryer here in the building, so don't be shy if you need a little help at times.

## **HARASSMENT, HAZING, AND BULLYING**

Harassment, Hazing and Bullying are prohibited by state law and can not be tolerated at Putney Central. (For more complete information on this topic, please refer to WSESU and Putney Town School Board policy F23:

<http://www.wssu.k12.vt.us/schools/WSESU%20F23%20Prevention%20of%20Harassment%20of%20Students.pdf>

**“Harassment”** is defined as an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a students’ or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. (Note: If judged to be severe enough, a formal harassment complaint could be filed based on a single incident of inappropriate behavior.)

**“Hazing”** is any act committed by a person, which is intended to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student.

**“Bullying,”** means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- is repeated over time;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the student; and
- occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or via electronic means, known as “cyberbullying.”

Students who experience harassment, hazing or bullying on school grounds, while participating in a school activity, or while waiting for or riding the bus, or feel they may have been victimized online are encouraged to report it to any adult member of the staff or directly to the Principal,

Herve Pelletier, or designee, Marisa Lazarus, our school counselor, or Robert Brooks, our school behavior interventionist.

All faculty and staff know that it is mandatory for school personnel to report anything they witness or to pass on any report they receive to the administration. Any retaliation against a victim who reports harassment, hazing or bullying will be considered very serious and dealt with accordingly.

All reports of harassment, hazing, or bullying are investigated. Should any reported incident be confirmed as factual, consequences for offenders of this policy may include suspension from school or activities or possibly expulsion, depending on the severity and persistence of the behavior(s). (Note: as is the case with all disciplinary matters, consequences are confidential.)

Please report any suspected harassment, hazing, or bullying to one of the following individuals, all of whom have been trained in how to conduct both informal and formal investigations into alleged infractions:

Marisa Lazarus, School Counselor  
Robert Brooks, Behavior Interventionist  
Herve Pelletier, Principal

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Purpose: The PBiS and mindfulness strategies used at PCS are intended to teach students ways to manage their behavior through self-regulation, take responsibility for any actions that might have negatively impacted the learning environment, and accept the consequences for their actions. All such procedures will be carried out in conformance with Vermont and federal law, which guarantees appropriate safeguards for the rights of all students, including students with handicaps or disabilities.

For more on VT PBiS: [www.pbisvermont.org/](http://www.pbisvermont.org/)

### **STEP 1: Instruction/Positive Interventions/Reminders**

Teachers and staff will use strategies, in keeping with our status as a PBiS school, that are designed to create a positive and effective learning environment for all students.

Students at all grade levels are taught appropriate, respectful conduct and language. School staff are expected to model these behaviors at all times, and will remind students of these objectives, as well as school and classroom rules, as a first response to most infractions.

### **STEP 2: TimeOut/Reset In the Classroom**

This procedure is used for two key purposes: a) to separate a disruptive student from the class/group so that instruction for the other students may continue; b) to give the student in question an opportunity to "cool down" and to reflect on his/her behavior or language. The staff

will make every effort to ensure that the student knows the reason(s) for the timeout/reset. Many classrooms have “peace tables,” where students can spend a few minutes to collect themselves and be ready to rejoin class.

### **STEP 3: Time Out Out of the Classroom**

Students who break a major school rule or who fail to respond positively to staff instruction or a timeout, may be sent to the Turnaround Room, and may be given work for the period (or more, if necessary). Excessive visits to the Turnaround Room may result in a conference with the student, the teacher, the parent/guardian and the Principal.

### **STEP 4: In-School or After-School Detention**

In rare cases, students who fail to respond positively to the consequences listed above, or are acting in a manner deemed unsafe, may be subject to an In-School or After-School Detention. Students serving a detention or an in-school suspension will receive academic work, plus make up work for missed or incomplete assignments and will be supervised by school staff. A discipline report will be issued, mailed home, and filed.

### **STEP 5: Out-Of-School Suspension**

Though rare at PCS, students who fail to respond positively to the above disciplinary procedures or whose misbehavior is blatant or raises safety concerns for themselves or others may be subject to an out-of-school suspension. In such instances, the Principal or designee will first arrange for a conference – in person or via phone - with the parent or guardian. The purposes of this conference include a presentation of the student's behavior/rule violation, review of prior disciplinary actions, scheduling of additional suspensions and the creation of an agreed upon plan to lead the student back to a more positive relationship with his/her teacher(s) or peers. Only the Principal, in accordance with district policies and procedures, issues out-of-school suspensions, though initial contact regarding a suspension may be made by other designated personnel.

Students can be suspended out of school for 10 days, or less, and will be given the opportunity for an informal hearing, which normally takes place during a parent meeting or conference call with the student present. Following this hearing there is no appeal for a short-term suspension of less than 10 days. Upon return to school the student and/or parents will meet with Mr. Brooks in the Turnaround Room to craft a plan to help him/her assume responsibility for their actions and brainstorm ways in which they might avoid similar difficulties in the future. In most cases students will need to return to school with a parent for an “intake” meeting/phone conference prior to resuming their normal class schedule.

## **SAFETY VIOLATION PROCEDURE**

Safety violations occur when a student's behavior jeopardizes the safety of others (student or adult) in the school, on school grounds, at a bus stop, on a field trip, or on the bus. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: bullying, harassment (see policy elsewhere in this handbook), fighting, threats, theft, inflicting damage to school property or equipment (vandalism), insubordination and possession of a weapon or dangerous object (including matches or lighters).

In case of a violation, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or alternative adult listed on the PCS Emergency Contact Form to arrange for the removal of the student from school for the remainder of the day. If the removal occurs in the afternoon, the Principal may decide to remove the student for the rest of the day and the following school day, (or more if necessary). If the parent/guardian (or alternate adult) cannot be reached and the student remains uncooperative or continues to pose a danger or disruption, the school may request assistance from law enforcement to assist in the removal of the student.

Except in cases where having a student remain on campus poses an immediate threat, no student will be removed from the school without being provided the opportunity to an informal hearing – in person or via phone - with the Principal, or designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian (or alternate adult). When immediate removal of the student is necessary prior to a hearing, the hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the removal. A discipline referral will be issued, shared with parent/guardian, mailed home, and filed.

Safety violations that take place at bus stops, on the school bus or on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity or trip will be addressed as if they occurred in the school and during official school hours. Students with a history of safety or other serious disciplinary infractions may be suspended from field trips, including the traditional year-end 8th grade trip, participation in which depends heavily on being in “good standing,” as defined by the middle school team.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES**

If school authorities have reasonable suspicion that a student is concealing any materials that are illegal, or in violation of school rules (including, but not limited to: weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or stolen items), the student may be questioned and/or searched. The scope and conduct of the search will be reasonably related to the circumstances that gave rise to the search. In accordance with the law an administrator (or, in rare cases, a designee) in the presence of another adult will conduct all searches. Depending on the gravity of the circumstances, parents may or may not be notified in advance, but in all cases, will be notified as soon as is possible, either via phone or email.

## **DAMAGE OR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY**

Students will be held responsible for any destruction of school property, including actions occurring after school hours or on weekends, or at activities such as dances or

athletic events. In all cases, parents/guardians will be responsible for financial restitution to repair or replace damaged property. Students may also receive inschool consequences, or suspensions from school, based on behavior, circumstances, and the extent of damage done. Serious incidents of property damage or willful vandalism will be reported to the Sheriff's Office or VT State Police for investigation.

## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO**

Putney Central School certifies compliance with the Drug Free School and Communities Act:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg51.html>

Accordingly, students, parents and guardians are hereby informed that:

Age-appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs are provided for all children; The unlawful possession, use, and/or distribution of illicit drugs, alcohol or tobacco products on school grounds is strictly prohibited; The district may impose disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion, prosecution, and rehabilitation; Copies of the policies and counseling re-entry programs are made available by request through the Principal.

The Putney Central School, including all of its grounds and playing fields, is a drug, alcohol and tobacco free campus, for adults as well as children. Possession of drugs, alcohol or tobacco will be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials. Smoking and the possession or use of smokeless tobacco on school grounds are violations of state law and may be reported as well.

## **WEAPONS**

Students are not permitted, under any circumstances, to possess a weapon in school, on a school bus, or on any school-sponsored activity to have a weapon in a desk, locker or backpack. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to: knives, guns, ammunition, martial arts equipment or other objects able to cause harm. This prohibition applies equally to school grounds, including the School Forest, as well as to all areas in the school building or busses. Note: The prohibition against knives covers ALL knives, including small folding or "pocket" knives used for outdoor activities or crafts. (Unless specific permission has been granted by the principal for a specific activity.)

Be particularly careful during hunting season to check pockets for ammunition or knives prior to coming to school, as these items can be easily overlooked. Students who inadvertently arrive to school with a knife or other weapon should turn it in immediately to the principal or front office.

In the event that a student is found to have a weapon in his/her possession, and depending on circumstances, it will be taken from him or her and a parent will be asked to retrieve it from



school, or turned over to the Sheriff's Office for investigation and possible action. Possible further consequences, up to and including suspension, are possible.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS**

Students should avoid bringing toys, trading cards (baseball cards, sports cards, other collectible items) to school unless authorized by a staff member. In our experience we have found that bringing such items to school, unless for a special project with a teacher's permission, can be a source of distraction. PCS can not be held responsible for lost or stolen items.

Pets may certainly visit school if accompanied by an adult with the consent of both the classroom teacher and the Principal. Unfortunately, pets are not allowed on the school bus. Please be sure that any pets visiting school are current on their shots.

## **CELL PHONES**

There can be no doubt that having ready access to a cell phone can be a great help with parent/child communication. That said, they present an opportunity for distraction from the task at hand, and have the potential to discourage face-to-face communication with peers and adults. Middle school students in grades 6/7/8 are required to turn in their phones in homeroom and only retrieve them during x-period once we have reached the end of the day.

Students should not use cell phones during the school day between the hours of 8:10 and 2:30. If a student is seen to be in possession of a cell phone during the day, the phone will be confiscated by a staff member, brought to Mr. Brooks in the Turnaround Room, and returned only to a parent/guardian.

We ask that parents help us to provide a focused learning environment and refrain from texting or calling students during the school day, and routing any necessary communications through the front office. We'll be sure to deliver any important messages. Students needing to make phone calls during the school day can always ask to use the phone in the main office.

***Please note: these guidelines apply to other electronic devices as well.***

**First infraction:** Phone is confiscated and returned, but only to the parent/guardian.

**Second infraction:** Student will be required to drop phone off with Mr. Brooks before the start of school and retrieve it at 2:45 p.m.

## **SKATEBOARDS**

While we realize that skating can be lots of fun and great exercise, skateboards should not be used during school hours. If you plan to skate after school you may bring your skateboard in, but it should be left with either Mr. Pelletier or Mr. Brooks during the day. The only area where skateboards may be permitted is the outdoor basketball court after school hours, and only under these conditions:

- When a member of our staff or a parent is present to supervise the activity, and
- When there are no basketball players on the court, and
- Skaters are wearing helmets.

The school reserves the right to temporarily confiscate skateboards from students who fail to meet these three conditions, or who have acting in an inappropriate or unsafe manner while on school property. Confiscated skateboards will be released to parents/guardians only.

## **PUMP TRACK AND BIKE SKILLS PARK**

Our pump track and mountain bike skills course offer great opportunities for fun and fitness. Please keep in mind and respect these common sense guidelines:

- Be sure your bike is in good running condition. If in doubt, or you need help, see Mr. Bristol or Mr. Pelletier.
- Helmets are an absolute must; no helmet, no ride... sorry.
- Ride carefully, and within your skill level.
- Be sure to yield the right of way to younger riders, even if you think you are "in the right."
- Team up and ride with a buddy, especially after hours!
- Have fun!

Though the area is available after school hours, all riders use it at their own risk, and parental supervision is highly recommended.

## **SCHOOL BUS RULES**

The school bus driver is in charge of the school bus and student riders and shall have the same authority in maintaining discipline as a teacher would in the classroom. Please understand that the driver's primary responsibility is to drive the bus in a safe manner, and any behavior that impacts his/her ability to do so can not be tolerated. By working together we can ensure that everyone arrives to school/home safely. All busses are equipped with video cameras.

Students should be at a designated bus stop five minutes before the bus arrives. Since the school bus is operating on a tight schedule, it cannot wait for students who are not within sight of the bus stop when the bus arrives.

Parents must provide - in advance - written permission for students to be let off at any stop other than their usual destination. Please make sure these notes get to the front office well before the end of the day so we have time to notify drivers.

A few things to keep in mind:

- All pupils must sit in their assigned seats, and remain seated until they reach their destination.
- While ordinary conversation between students is permitted, loud, vulgar, and other inappropriate language will not be tolerated; use “inside voices.”
- Smoking/vaping/chewing tobacco are not permitted on the school bus.
- Objects such as paper, pencils, etc., may not be thrown on the floor or out the window.
- Food or beverages may not be consumed on the bus.
- The rear door is for emergency use only.
- All pupils must be seated with feet in front of them while the bus is in motion.
- The aisle of the bus must be kept clear. Students may bring items on the bus only if the items can be carried on the student's lap. They may not bring sports equipment such as hockey sticks, bats, balls of any kind, skates, skate boards, snow boards, skis, ski poles, roller boards or any large item such as a musical instrument that obstructs a window or aisle.
- Students and other passengers traveling on the buses under contract by our bus service provider should be aware that the buses have been equipped with video cameras. Riders should therefore have no expectation of privacy. The school, district and bus service provider will have recourse to these recordings, as situations require.

Any violation of the above regulations will be reported to the Principal or designee and appropriate action will be taken. All behavioral expectations and disciplinary actions also apply to those PCS children who ride on the Grammar School buses, and all field trips.

## **SCHOOL BUS RULES**

### **Bus Stop Behavior**

Students should wait for the bus in a safe place, clear of traffic and conduct themselves in an orderly fashion while awaiting the bus. School rules and disciplinary actions extend to bus stops. Because there have occasionally been complaints from the community on this issue, we ask parents/guardians to report rule violations to the school. Please do NOT discipline a student unless it is your own child. That said, a calm reminder of appropriate behavior and asking a student's name for reporting to the school is entirely appropriate.

When the school bus appears, students must stand in an orderly line and wait for the bus to come to a full stop before approaching. Horseplay and rushing to the bus, jostling or pushing are unsafe, and not permitted. All students should be careful to allow themselves enough time to reach their bus stop without having to make a wild dash at the last moment. Bus drivers are

instructed to report violations of these basic safety factors to the Principal or designee for appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

- The first refusal to comply with these regulations will result in a warning.
- The second offense will result in a second and final warning.
- The third offense will result in a three-day suspension from riding the bus.
- The fourth offense will result in indefinite suspension from the school bus.

When a student is suspended from riding the school bus, the district will not be responsible for providing transportation. Before a student is reinstated, there must be a meeting between a parent/guardian, the student, and the Principal or designee. Please note: there may be circumstances that could result in immediate suspension from the bus; such disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the Principal and/or the bus company coordinator.

### **Riding a Different Bus**

In order for a student to ride a bus that is not his/her regular bus, the student **MUST** have a written note from his/her parent/guardian (including date and signature). This note is approved by the Administrative Assistant in the front office, or the Principal, and is then given to the bus driver by the student.

If a parent/guardian forgets to write a note, or when plans change during the day that involve a bus change, please call the school **NO LATER THAN 2:00 p.m.** so we can get the message to your child. The front office can be a busy place at times, and it is particularly difficult to field these calls around dismissal time. By working together we can avoid any miscommunication that might result in a missed ride home.

## **PUPIL TRANSPORTATION UTILIZING PRIVATE CARS**

Putney Central School has a policy concerning the use of private cars in transporting students to/from school functions (i.e., field trips, athletic events, etc.):

"A motor vehicle owned by a teacher, paraprofessional, and/or parent/guardian shall not be operated in the transportation of school children to/from school functions at any time when the owner and operator thereof is not insured under an insurance policy to indemnify against liability for damages for personal injuries to a limit of \$100,000/\$300,000. The number of persons to be transported, including driver and children, shall be less than, or equal to, the maximum seating capacity of said motor vehicle."

In addition, Vermont laws require safety seating for children 5 years and younger and that children use booster seats until age 8. All children age 12 and under are safer in the back seat ... and please remember to buckle up!

Special forms are available from the school office for parents who drive students to/from school functions. Evidence of appropriate insurance shall be filed with the front office and is valid for the current school year. We urge all parents/guardians to contact their insurance carrier for advance information regarding coverage; additional coverage for daily or weekly basis may be available for a minimum charge.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

Student progress and achievement are assessed in a variety of ways. We have utilized AIMSweb, Quick Phonics Screeners, Math Interviews, Smarter Balanced (Common Core assessments) and a variety of other classroom-level assessments aimed at helping teachers and their students optimize their teaching and learning. For more on the Smarter Balanced Assessments:

<http://education.vermont.gov/sbac>

Teacher observation and note taking, conferences with students, student self assessments, tests and quizzes also supply and enhance information about each child. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, normally in November and March, but can be scheduled at any time by making an appointment with your child's teacher. Written report cards are issued twice a year: in January and June in grades K5 and four times a year, November, January, April and June, to parents/guardians of students in grades six, seven and eight. Please keep in mind that middle school parents can access student progress data via our PowerSchool Parent Portal. See Sarah Coughlin in the front office for login information. Do note that for security reasons we can not send passwords via email.

If a parent/guardian would like more information about their child's progress, they should contact their child's teacher(s) and/or advisor. In return, if the teachers feel you, as parent/guardian, need to have more information, they will contact you, irrespective of scheduled parent/teacher conferences.

## **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

This process of assigning students to classrooms and teachers is often complex and time consuming. Many factors must be considered (e.g.: numbers of students in each class, boy/girl ratio, educational history, needs of each student, etc.). Class placement decisions are made by faculty teams, the school counselor, and the principal. Parents who wish to participate in the class placement process should submit a written description of their child's educational needs and the type of learning environment that works best for their child to the principal by the first week of May. Please do not request a specific teacher or class by name. Parental requests for class placement are considered carefully, but unfortunately not all requests can, or will be honored.

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

Putney Central School is proud of its active and longstanding volunteer program. Volunteers add a great variety of talent, resources and fun to the educational program. Volunteers act as tutors for individual students, help with reading or mathematics, assist in class productions and field trips, the Four Winds (formerly the FOX program) help with fundraising, etc. The possibilities are many. If you would like to volunteer at the school please contact the office for more information. You can be sure we'll have something for you to do!

## **THE PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The ParentTeacher Organization is a collaborative of parents and school staff. Its purpose is to identify and address areas of common interest and concerns regarding the school's present and future needs. P.T.O meetings vary greatly in focus and agenda. These meetings are open to all parents, community members and staff and provide a forum for debate, brainstorming, problem solving, learning and fundraising. The PTO is led by an Executive Committee. Parents are urged to attend and become involved in helping set a direction for the school's future! At present PTO organizers are PCS parents Ellen Strong and Marie Teagardin.

## **FOUR WINDS**

Four Winds is a nature education program offered by the Four Winds Nature Institute [www.fourwindsinstitute.org](http://www.fourwindsinstitute.org). The goal of Four Winds is to provide training and materials such as slide shows, bones, puppets and handouts to adult volunteers who teach theme-based activities on a monthly basis to students in grades K4. At present the Four Winds program coordinator is PCS parent/board member Emily Pals.

## **THE WINTER SPORTS PROGRAM**

PCS offers a Winter Sports program that is supported by parent and community volunteers, and funded, in large measure, through our school budget and private contributions. Parent Coordinators help organize the On-Campus program, Cross Country skiing at Grafton Ponds, skating at the Memorial Park Rink in Brattleboro and the Alpine/Snowboarding program at Mount Snow. This program normally runs for six weeks on Friday afternoons from early January through mid February. Contact Nancy Gagnon if you would like to get involved.

## **AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS**

It is the intention of PCS to provide viable sports options for students who would like to participate in competitive sports. It's important to keep in mind that the emphasis of our program

is fun skill development, and that we consciously avoid the “win at all costs” thinking that can make sports less than enjoyable. Depending on numbers, teams may be co-ed.

The Putney Recreation League (PRL) offers sports for students in grades K-6. Students in middle school (6/7/8) may participate in the following after school teams: Fall: Soccer (girls/boys); Crosscountry running. (Students in grades 1-8.) Winter: Basketball (girls/boys) Spring: Baseball (boys) Softball (girls)

In addition, there is normally a mountain biking group, led by Pip Bannister, Leah Toffolon, and Tony Coven, that rides one afternoon a week in both fall and spring. No bike? No helmet? Not a problem. Contact Tony or Mr. Pelletier for help with getting you a loaner bike and helmet. We want everyone to be able to enjoy the fun of riding!

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Our PCS library welcomes volunteers. Library volunteers are trained to assist in circulation (i.e. helping students check books in and out) and in helping students find books, or conduct group readings. School volunteers who work without direct staff supervision will be required to submit to a background check and fingerprinting. Please contact the principal for more information.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Many items are found on school grounds during the year, including lunch boxes, jackets, sneakers, etc. If found by school personnel, misplaced items will be brought to the office and placed in the Lost and Found for up to two weeks. Please feel free to come in and check the Lost and Found for misplaced items. Do keep in mind that due to the large volume of items that end up in the Lost and Found it's not possible for us to hold on to items indefinitely. Feel free to come in and take a look for lost items. Unclaimed items are donated to PCS families or local charities.

## **TEXTBOOKS/LIBRARY BOOKS**

Students are responsible for the care of their textbooks and library books. Homemade book covers for classroom use and/or schoolsupplied book covers can be fun and useful. If a book is lost or shows unusual wear or intentional damage when returned, at the end of the year parents/guardians will be asked to pay for a replacement book. Final grades and report cards at the end of the school year will not be released until such payments have been made in full.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH**

A range of health screening and health promotion activities is provided at PCS. The school nurse's office is equipped to administer first aid and to evaluate a sick or injured student. It also houses health related books, pamphlets and other information that may be given/loaned to students, staff and parents/guardians.

Health services are provided five days a week. In cases of illness or injury, it is essential that the school nurse has the name(s) and phone number(s) of every student's parent/guardian or close relative/friend for immediate contact (Emergency Cards are to be filled out at the beginning of the year). For the protection of the school community, please contact and inform the school nurse of any infectious disease or contagious condition a student may have, as well as any significant change in your child's health status.

## **HEALTH RECORDS**

School health records and yearly updated Emergency Contact Information is kept for each student. The health record contains pertinent health information and immunization records. Parents/guardians are urged to keep these records up to date by notifying the school nurse of operations, immunizations, and serious illnesses. Please be sure to complete a health form for your child, and include:

- where parent/guardian can be reached;
- permission to administer Tylenol when necessary, and
- permission to make arrangements for medical treatment in case of emergency when a parent/guardian cannot be reached.

Should this information change during the year, please contact the school without delay.

## **IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

Vermont law states that "all public, private, parochial, kindergarten, elementary or secondary school children, regardless whether they have been enrolled in a school during the previous year" must be immunized appropriate to age before school entry unless exempted from immunizations for medical, religious or moral reasons. A second MMR booster is required for ALL students and Hepatitis B is required for entry into 7th grade. PCS must have a student's immunization record on file prior to school entry.

VT School Immunization Regulations: <http://healthvermont.gov/hc/imm/schoolentry.aspx>

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Students showing signs of contagious diseases should be kept home. Medical supervision for diagnosis and treatment should be obtained. Students showing symptoms of illness should be kept home (i.e., sore throat, upset stomach, elevated temperature). Since all students go outside at scheduled recess times it is expected that if a student is well enough to return to school, he/she is also well enough for outside recess. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the day's expected weather. During days of extreme cold, all students are kept inside or go out for a shortened recess.



## **HEAD LICE**

The psychological, social and economic impact of head lice (pediculosis) infestations can create significant challenges to a school community. That said, we understand that a number of cases occur each year, and the school will take the necessary measures to see that effective treatment takes place to prevent spreading, and to reduce the loss of educational time for involved students. If you discover lice or nits on your child please notify the school nurse and keep your child home until treatment has been completed.

Any staff member who suspects that a student has head lice will report this to the school nurse (or her designee) immediately. The school nurse (or designee) will contact a parent/guardian. All students in the same classroom and all siblings of that student will be examined by trained personnel. The signs and symptoms of head lice include: itching scalp and/or back of neck presence of lice; presence of nits (eggs) on hair shafts.

Verbal contact and written instructions for effective treatment will be provided to the family. Please instruct your child not to share combs, brushes, caps, hats or other personal clothing items.

## **HEALTH SCREENING**

Screening programs are a traditional aspect of school health services. The chief purpose is to detect previously undiagnosed health problems that may, by early intervention, be more readily corrected. Routine screenings include: blood pressure (grades 1 and 5, optional); hearing (kindergarten and grades 1,2,3,5,7)\*; vision (kindergarten and grades 1,2,3,5,7)

\*Please note: parents are permitted to opt their children out of health screening tests.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

If for any reason medication must be administered at school, only the school nurse (or designee) shall administer the medication, in compliance with the school's medication policy and following appropriate principles of medication administration.

### **Prescription Medication**

Putney Central School recognizes that at the present time a number of students are able to attend regular school as a result of effective use of prescribed medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illnesses. Any student who is required to take a prescribed medication during the regular school day must comply with the following regulations:

Written orders from a physician detailing: a) the name of the student; b) the drug dosage; c) the condition being treated; and d) the time the medication is to be given. The school nurse must receive these before the medication can be given. A renewal of a long-term medication order is required each school year.

Written permission from the parent/guardian of the student requesting that the school district comply with the physician's order must accompany the physician's order.

Students with chronic illnesses (e.g., seizure disorders, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, asthma, etc.) who are responsible for self-administering their medications, under the direction and with the approval of their family physician, will be allowed to continue this practice. All medications shall be kept in the school nurse's office, including inhalers.

Medications must be brought to the school by an adult, be in their original containers, and labeled appropriately by the pharmacist or physician. No medications of any type should be transported on the school bus.

Unused or outdated medication shall be destroyed or returned to the parent or guardian for disposal.

### **Non-Prescription Medication**

The school nurse must be notified if a nonprescription medication is to be used during school hours or activities. It is against school policy for students to keep any medications with them and to administer it on their own while at school. Nonprescription medications will be administered only after the parent/guardian has signed a permission form and the school receives the medication in its original container. Nonprescription medication must be left in the school nurse's office. Please see school nurse Arlene Scott for any further information, including various permission forms for medication, etc.

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## **INTERNET USE**

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting millions of computers, individuals and organizations from all over the world. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. We live in a media saturated world, and our hope is that by partnering with our parents we can guide our students in making consistently good choices when it comes to internet use.

Students and teachers have access to: Electronic mail communication with people all over the world; Information and news from NASA, the Smithsonian, the Congressional Library and countless other organizations, to say nothing of Google; Public domain software and shareware of all types; Discussion groups on many topics ranging from Chinese culture to the environment to music, pop culture, and politics.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Putney Central School has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials.

However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial/inappropriate information or images. PCS firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction on this network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational mission of the school.

WSESU and its member boards recognize and support each family's right to decide whether to allow their child to have access to the Internet. Given the ubiquity of technology, PCS has adopted the policy that all use of technology and the internet has become an integral part of our educational enterprise. With this in mind, we are no longer requiring that an Acceptable Use Policy form be signed. Rather, we assume that we have a patent understanding with students and parents regarding the use of technology at PCS. As an extra layer of security, and to provide teachers better insight into how student are using school-supplied technology, we have installed Go Guardian software in all middle school classrooms. This program allows teacher to view, either on their laptop, on projected on a screen, all laptop screens of students working in their classroom.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNET USE AT PCS**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a suspension or cancellation of those privileges. Each student who receives an account will be part of a discussion with PCS staff pertaining to the proper use of the network. The system administrator(s) will determine what is appropriate use and their decision is final and may result in suspension or closure of a student account at any time. The administration, faculty and staff of PCS may request the system administrator(s) to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

### **Network Etiquette**

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to: be polite; do not get abusive in your messages to others; use appropriate language; never reveal your personal address, phone numbers, or the phone numbers of students or staff; note that email is not guaranteed to be private; people who operate the system have access to all mail; messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities; do not use the network in such a way as to disrupt the use of the network by others; all communications and information accessible via network should be assumed to be private property.

### **Security**

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel that you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the Internet as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user

identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the NSFNET Internet backbone. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Putney Central School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. PCS will not be responsible for any adverse effect incurred by use of the network. This includes loss of data, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by it's own negligence, errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. PCS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

The use of an account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational goals of Putney Central School.

## **DARROW SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Every spring the Putney Town School Board awards scholarships endowed by the Darrow Scholarship Fund to students from Putney to be used toward their post high school education or training. Applications, which must submit by students in the early spring of their senior year in high school, can be obtained at the BUHS counseling office. Students must reside in Putney at the time of application and need to provide required residency documentation with their applications.

## **RIGHT TO A PUBLIC EDUCATION**

### **Child Find Notice**

Under Public Law 94142 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: All children need, deserve, and have a right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. (Also referred to as FAPE). Further, federal law (Public Law 94142) states that this right to a free education must be available to all disabled children as well.

The Putney Central School and the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union need to know if there are children or youths between the ages of zero (0) and twenty one (21) years who are disabled, out of school, and/or are not receiving any education at all. If there is such a disabled child in your home or neighborhood, please contact Putney Central School, or write or telephone:

Lyle Holiday, Superintendent of Schools

## **POLICIES OF THE PUTNEY CENTRAL SCHOOL**

Copies of the official policies of the Putney Central School and the Putney Town School Board are available at the school, town offices and at the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Central Office. <http://www.wssu.k12.vt.us/schools/policiesbuhs.htm>

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In accordance with the Federal FERPA Policies (federal regulations promulgated pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. 20 U.S.C. 122g et seq.), parents have the right to:

Inspect and review their children's records; Seek amendment of the record if it is inaccurate or misleading; Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable student information except as provided in 34 C.F.R.99.31; File a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe the Act has been violated.

Parents/guardians wishing to review their children's records should contact School Counselor Marisa Lazarus. Parents/guardians wishing to amend their children's records should request the amendment in writing and direct it to School Counselor Marisa Lazarus.

The Principal has the authority to disclose student records to persons within the school who have a legitimate educational purpose for reviewing the records.

Noncustodial parents have the same right to review school records as custodial parents, unless a current court order restricts this right.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND PUBLICITY**

The Windham Southeast Supervisory Union school districts wish to remind parents/guardians who do not want their child's name publicized for any reason that they must indicate such desire in a letter to the Superintendent of Schools at the beginning of the school year.

Public Law 93380 includes an amendment commonly referred to as the "Buckley Amendment," which requires school systems to refrain from publicizing any information at all about school children when parents do not wish such publicity to occur. Examples of the school's publication of names would include reports of athletic events, academic honors, newsletters, musical or dramatic performances, or other student activities. Unless written the Superintendent of Schools receives information from the parents/guardians, it will be assumed that publication is agreeable.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of the Putney Central School and the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union not to discriminate against students, parents, guardians, employees, unions, or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the school district, applicants for employment or admission, or other members of the community on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap and/or age in admission or access to or treatment or employment in any of the PCS and Supervisory Union programs, activities, policies, procedures, and practices, as and to the extent provided by law.

Any person having inquiries concerning the Putney Central School's compliance with regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to contact the Kate Margaitis, Equity Coordinator for the WSESU, Brattleboro Union High School, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

Any violation of the equity policy can and should be reported to a member of the Putney Central School staff, the Principal, and/or the Equity Coordinator at the address listed above.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Safety is always at the center of our concerns here at PCS, for only when our students feel safe can they fully realize their potential, in both academic and social/emotional realms. To this end, we have taken measures to ensure that the school facility is secure during the school day, and ask that all visitors, outside of normal drop off/pick up times, (even those well known to us), check in with the front office before venturing into the school proper. In the event of an emergency our only way to account for all who may be in the building is through our daily attendance record and our sign in/out sheets in the front office. Further, unless necessary, parents are asked to remain outside the building until 2:35, and then to congregate only in the glass hallway during dismissal, which is our highest student traffic time of the day.

The doors to the building are locked once school gets underway, during which time access will be available only by “buzzing in” at either the front or glass hallway entrances.

In addition, we conduct a number of safety-related drills, both “fire” and “lockdown,” throughout the school year; some are announced, others not. The intent of all drills, of course, is to bring our practice to a level that in the event of an actual emergency, all parties – students, faculty, administration, and staff – are able to perform at a level that helps ensure safety for all. While we know that lock down type drills in particular can be somewhat stressful for younger students, we do our best to teach appropriate, mindful behavior to all so that things go as smoothly as possible. Parents can assist us by asking their children if they’ve practiced any drills lately and how they felt things went; feedback is always helpful!

Putney Fire Department Chief Tom Goddard has facilitated quarterly meetings of key administrative personnel from the five schools in Putney – PCS, Landmark, Greenwood, Grammar School, and the Putney School – with an eye toward sharing common concerns regarding security and safety, and evaluating opportunities for enhanced communication. In addition to Putney FD and Rescue, regular attendees at this meeting have included representatives from the Windham County Sheriff's Department and the VT State Police.

Over the past few years the WSESU has partnered closely with area first responders in the Brattleboro area to create an emergency response handbook for Brattleboro schools, a very brief summary of which, entitled WSESU Common Terminology, appears at the end of this handbook. Some PCS personnel have participated in these discussions and “table top” drills, and the experience has been valuable.

Should we ever be in a situation where an evacuation of the premises is required, parents should not report to school to pick up their children, but meet them at the designated reunification site, which, for security reasons, will not be disclosed until it is deemed safe to do so by the Incident Commander (the principal, a member of local or state law enforcement, or the fire chief). We realize that this is an exceptionally difficult issue for many parents, but rest assured that in partnership with area first responders, we will do our utmost to keep your children safe. For security reasons, we will not divulge any reunification location(s) until such time as it may be necessary to do so. In the event that an evacuation is called for we will communicate via our SchoolMessenger system, so please be certain that we have accurate phone and email contact in our school data system by updating with Sarah in the front office. Note: during an actual emergency it is strongly suggested that social media posts, unless published on our official Facebook page, be viewed very skeptically.

## **PRESCHOOL (PK4) ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES**

Effective July 2015

There are a maximum of 16 total spots available in our PK4 program, and completed applications, including notarized proof of residency, submitted before April 1 (prior to the enrollment school year) will be given priority. Please note that our PK4 program runs all day throughout the school year, and students are expected to be in attendance Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

In order to participate in the program children must be age 4 by September 1 of the enrollment year, and a resident of Putney\*, in keeping with [Title 16 of the VT state statutes](#). A proof of residence form, available in our front office, must be completed, notarized, and submitted prior to students being considered for enrollment. In the event that there are more students than slots available, a waiting list will be compiled. Should an opening occur, students will be offered a slot based on age attained by September 1 of the enrollment year, with older students given priority.

Students younger than 4 by September 1 will not be considered for enrollment in the program, but may submit application materials, including notarized proof of residency, for the next school year.

Should there be slots remaining once all eligible Putney students have enrolled, the school reserves the right to accept tuition from students residing outside of Putney at a rate of \$10,500/student/school year. In order to ensure the integrity of the program, partial enrollment plans are not available. Children of non-resident faculty members are subject to the same enrollment timeline as those of non-faculty, and pay tuition consistent with PCS policy for all grades, typically 50% of the stated non-resident tuition rate.

Depending on interest, we may offer PK4 families an extended day option, during which children will have supervised playtime, and a healthy snack. The extended day program runs from 2:45-5:30 p.m., and cost \$15/day/child. Please be advised that while we make every effort to accommodate all 4 years olds living in Putney there may be circumstances that preclude a particular student's enrollment, including having reached our program limit of 16 students, initial enrollment materials having been submitted past the April 1 deadline, etc., and that there is a degree of administrative discretion in terms of enrollment. Please direct inquiries regarding enrollment in our PK4 program to the school counselor or the principal.

As is true for all students at Putney Central, only students who are residents of Putney, or who have a biological or adoptive parent physically residing in Putney, are eligible to participate in our PK4 program.

*~ Herve Pelletier, Principal*



